

# **THE TRUTH OF THE PANMUNJOM INCIDENT**

**Foreign Languages Publishing House  
Pyongyang, Korea  
1 9 7 6**







## **C O N T E N T S**

<b>1. On the Truth of the Panmunjom Incident</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2. Statement of the Korean Central News Agency</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>3. Strong Protest against Grave Armed Provocations by the US Imperialist Aggression Army in the Joint Security Area, Panmunjom</b>	<b>9</b>
(Statements by the Senior Member of our side at the meetings of the Military Armistice Commission)	
<b>4. Accord Reached on the Proposed Change of Order in Joint Security Area of Panmunjom</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>5. US Newspaper "The Guardian" Edits Special Writeups on August 26</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>6. US Newspaper "Workers World" Carries a Special Article on August 27</b>	<b>26</b>







## **ON THE TRUTH OF THE PANMUNJOM INCIDENT**

A big incident of clash occurred between the security personnel of the two sides in the Joint Security Area of Panmunjom on August 18, 1976.

Around 10 hours 45 minutes on the morning of August 18, 7 guards including the American army officers and other 7 work party members, in a large size truck, drove to the roadside nearby the Panmun Bridge and got off. No sooner had they got off the truck than they strove to fell a tree on the road.

Four security personnel of our side who were on a routine duty at that time, seeing the act of the enemy, repeatedly told them that the tree must not be felled arbitrarily without a prior consultation with our side as the tree is controlled by our side. The US army officer did not listen to us first. When he could not find any reply to the just demand of our side he defended himself, saying that they would just prune the tree because the tree hindered observation between the Panmungyo post and a post on a hilltop on the opposite side.

The security personnel of our side said that it would be alright if they just wanted to do some pruning. Upon hearing this, the personnel of the US side pretended to prune the tree. Therefore, the personnel of our side were going to leave that place.

When our personnel walked some steps, the enemy suddenly started felling the tree with axes. Seeing this, the personnel of our side went back and again told them not to fell the tree as they had been told.

But far from lending an ear to our just demand, the US guards acted arrogantly and heaped intolerable insults upon the security personnel of our side.

The enemies kept on insulting our personnel and even spat on their faces, shouting "savages!", "inferior nation!".

But in order to prevent the aggravation of the situation, the security personnel of our side endured such insults and repeatedly warned them to refrain from such rude acts and demanded them to stop such provocative acts at once.

Nevertheless, the enemies did not stop the provocative acts they had already started.

A US army guard officer pounced upon a security person of our side and attempted to strike him with the axe with which he had been felling the tree.



Furthermore, US army guards, counting on their numerical superiority, picked up axes and woodclubs out of their jeep and, throwing them at our guards, pounced upon them all at once and struck them collectively.

Thus a free-for-all fight took place between the enemy guards and our guards. This critical situation compelled the security personnel of our side to take measures in self-defence.

The security personnel of our side put up a death-defying resistance against the enemy, defending themselves with bare hands from the enemy officers who brandished the axes, picking up and throwing back the axes and woodclubs hurled by the enemy.

When the situation developed in this way, the enemy reinforced his force with more than 30 hooligans he had kept waiting in advance.

As a result, 4 security personnel of our side were surrounded, attacked and collectively beaten by over 40 guards of the US side.

Five security personnel of our side who were on duty at the nearby post and a few members then on duty within the conference zone hurried up to the spot and tried to rescue the victims of our side from the critical situation.

Five security personnel of our side were heavily or lightly wounded during the incident provoked by the US side.

This is how the incident happened.

This notwithstanding, the US imperialists and the Pak Jung Hi puppet clique are now distorting the facts as if we had provoked the incident.

But the stark facts clearly show that it is the US imperialists who had deliberately provoked the Panmunjom incident according to their carefully premeditated plan.

This is proved by the fact that they had tried to fell arbitrarily a tree controlled by our side, though they must consult with our side in advance if they wanted to do so.

The tree the enemy wanted to cut down was a tree growing by the road paved and controlled by our side. It was a tree tended by our side.

Accordingly, they should consult with our side about the felling of the tree. This the US side knows well. Precisely on August 6, the US side had wanted to fell this tree. But when our guards told them that they should not fell that tree without consultation with our side, they consented to it and went back.

Afterwards, the US side had never proposed to consult with our side on that problem. But on August 18, they suddenly turned up to fell the tree.

Although the US side knew well that if they felled the tree without prior consultation, our side would stop it, this time they attempted to cut down the tree arbitrarily. This proves that they had intended to take this opportunity to provoke some incident of clash deliberately.

Now the US side is trying to justify itself, saying that by felling the tree, they were "performing a peaceful mission" aimed at "normal



maintenance work". But this is a sheer lie which can deceive nobody.

If the US side really had wanted to fell the tree with such intention, why should it have committed such an arbitrary action without prior consultation with our side on that matter?

Actually that tree did not matter to the US side.

The very fact that the US side took an arbitrary action in disregard of the preceding practices clearly proves that it had been aimed to fabricate a pretext to provoke a war by all means by causing an incident.

The US side had premeditated and deliberately caused the Panmunjom incident. This was eloquently proved by the fact that the US guards kept telephone contacts while provoking the incident and that soon after the fighting broke out between the enemy and us, the US side not only reinforced its strength with more than 30 bandits but also brought in over 100 bulletproof-clad and heavily-armed military personnel in three trucks to the spot in no more than 10 minutes.

The fact that the enemy had deliberately provoked this incident according to a premeditated plan was more clearly disclosed by another proof that the enemy had already prepositioned cameras to photo the incident on a high place fully open to the spot, before the outbreak of the incident.

When this fact was disclosed, the enemy is defending himself as if he always kept cameras there.

But it is irrefutable that this is an obstinate pretext and a sheer lie.

After having provoked the incident, the US authorities made a hue and cry as if the personnel of our side had attacked the personnel of the US side with axes and woodclubs.

Who on earth had carried axes and woodclubs?

The personnel of our side had never carried any axes or woodclubs from the outset.

It was the US personnel themselves who had carried the axes and clubs in their hands or brought on truck.

Those lethal weapons—the axe and woodclubs—captured on the spot are in our hands.

The axe carries the English letters "Stubai Austria" and the woodclub "Chickasaw".

In this way the enemy's clumsy axes magic was revealed to the full.

The current incident had been meticulously organized and planned by the enemy beforehand. This is more evidently exposed by the abnormal frantic rackets, threat and blackmail and all kinds of hypocritical acts committed by the US imperialists after having provoked the Panmunjom incident.

All facts show that US imperialism had already conspired a trick in advance to shift the responsibility for the Panmunjom incident upon us.

They maliciously tried to prevent the disclosure of their crime and distorted the fact completely.



As soon as the incident broke out, we urgently called a security officers meeting, considering it natural to deal with the incident at that meeting first, since the incident occurred between the guardsmen of the two sides in the Joint Security Area.

But the US imperialists were arrogant enough to refuse this just proposal of ours and came out with a demand for the convocation of a meeting of the Military Armistice Commission, raising a frantic row of viciously slandering our side.

It is because they were afraid that if this matter was discussed between the guards, the parties concerned at the incident spot, the truth of the incident they provoked might be revealed to the full.

Obstructing the examination into the truth of the incident like this, they sent an ultimatum-style notice to our side.

And no sooner had the provocative incident started on August 18 than Ford, Kissinger and other US Government high authorities issued "statements" full of falsehood and fabrications and conducted big frantic rackets in an attempt to shift the "responsibility" for this incident to us, mobilizing all their reptile propaganda media.

The south Korean puppet clique, according to the script of the United States, are conducting more vicious "anti-communist" clamours, running amuck with bloodshot eyes to stir up the hostile sentiments between the north and south.

Synchronizing with such rackets, the United States issued an "emergency alert order" to the US army units occupying south Korea at noon on August 19 and made them combat-ready and began to mass the armed forces in the Korean front on a large scale.

Following the Panmunjom incident, the US imperialist aggressors introduced into south Korea a squadron of "F-4" supersonic fighters from Okinawa and a squadron of "F-111" fighter-bombers from the US mainland.

The Japan-based "naval task force" of the US Seventh Fleet has intruded into the waters of our country. This "naval task force" consists of a cruiser and four destroyers with the attack aircraft carrier "Midway". The "Midway" is reportedly carrying "F-4 Phantom" fighter-bombers and other aircraft of various kinds, guided missiles, as well as thousands of men.

The US ruling circles are repeatedly holding war confabs every day and seeking a pretext to ignite the fuse of war, speaking loudly about so-called "measure of punishment" and "countermeasures".

All these facts show clearly that the United States had premeditated even a plan of practical action to provoke a new war in Korea and deliberately provoked this Panmunjom incident and is making the maximum use of it to cover up and "justify" its policy of aggression and war.

The craftiness of the sinister design rigged up by the United States does not confine itself to this.

Though the United States deliberately provoked the Panmunjom in-



cident and is strengthening war provocations frantically, it is enacting a clumsy farce to win the favour of the world public opinion, pretending that it was displaying "restraint" to prevent the aggravation of tensions in Korea because of this incident.

But, with nothing can the US rulers cover up their true colour as the provoker of the Panmunjom incident and as the criminals who are making desperate efforts to ignite a new war in Korea.

We can say that as the general situation is now developing daily in favour of our people and the revolution and they find themselves more and more isolated in the international arena, the US imperialists have gone so far as to provoke without hesitation even such vicious criminal provocative incidents as the one in Panmunjom in an attempt to get rid of such isolation and reverse the situation even a little in favour of them.

They provoked the recent incident at a time when discussion was in full swing on the question of adoption of a resolution on Korea at the Fifth Summit Conference of Non-Aligned Countries.

They also provoked this incident just after a number of countries submitted a proposal to discuss again the Korean question at the 31st session of the UN General Assembly.

It is obvious that confused by such developments, the US imperialists are trying to discredit our country and put it on the defensive in the international arena by fabricating some exciting incident.

It can be evidently guessed by the fact that on August 18 the US imperialists presented to the UN Security Council a report full of fraud and fabrication made by the "UN Command in south Korea" in connection with the recent incident, according to the pre-written script.

All facts prove that it is none other than the US imperialists who have brought dark cloud to Panmunjom.

On the morning of August 21, the United States side brought heavily-armed combat units into the headquarters area of the Military Armistice Commission and arranged a "precaution flight" in the air over the area with 3 Guam-based "B-52" strategic bombers, 26 helicopters and jet planes, and then herded hundreds of armed personnel into the Joint Security Area, again committing provocations.

This shows that they are malignantly manoeuvring to deliberately provoke incidents to seek a pretext to start war and draw us in their provocation.

It is exposed to the whole world that the recent incident in Panmunjom was a criminal premeditated provocative act deliberately committed by US imperialists in an attempt to stir up antagonism and hostility between the north and south of Korea, aggravate the tensions and lead the situation to the brink of war.

These reckless war rackets raised by the US imperialists and the puppet Pak Jung Hi clique are a vicious manoeuvre to ignite an aggressive



war in Korea at all costs; they are a malevolent manoeuvre to get out of their internal and external crises.

Ford, the ringleader of US imperialism, provoked the Panmunjom incident in order to justify his sinister policy of seeking a way out of the ever-worsening crises in aggression and war, to restore his lost prestige and to rake up votes for him in the forthcoming presidential election to get him reelected.

In provoking the Panmunjom incident, the US imperialists aimed also to save from the danger of destruction the puppet Pak Jung Hi clique that has become an international orphan, isolated and rejected at home and abroad, and continue to use them as their lackey.

Manipulated by the US imperialists, the Pak Jung Hi puppets, taking advantage of the Panmunjom incident, staged a "public trial" on those who were involved in the "Declaration for Democracy and National Salvation" and imposed heavy sentences on 18 persons of different strata including Kim Dae Jung.

This clearly shows that by provoking the Panmunjom incident the US imperialists and the Pak Jung Hi puppets heinously designed to divert the world's attention and further intensify their fascist repression of the democratic forces in south Korea.

If the US imperialist aggressors ignore stark reality and lessons of history and try to achieve their aggressive aims in Korea by means of war, it will only hasten their final destruction.



## **STATEMENT OF THE KOREAN CENTRAL NEWS AGENCY**

As already reported, the US imperialist aggressors running wild to start a new war of aggression in Korea committed a grave provocation against our side in the Joint Security Area of Panmunjom on August 18.

Around 10 hours 45 minutes on the morning of August 18, the US imperialist aggressors suddenly called out 14 bandits carrying axes and lethal weapons to fell a tree at random in the Joint Security Area.

The tree was planted and tended with much care by our side for a long time.

Seeing the act of the enemy, 4 security personnel of our side went to the spot and repeatedly told the enemy that the tree must not be felled arbitrarily without a prior consultation with our side as the tree is controlled by our side.

The enemy who came out with the aim of committing a provocation from the outset, far from complying with the just demand of our side, committed the unbearable insulting act of hurling invectives and spitting at the security personnel of our side, counting on his numerical superiority, and collectively pounced upon at last and beat security personnel of our side, and injured them by throwing an axe.

This critical situation compelled the security personnel of our side to take a step in self-defence.

The security personnel of our side put up a death-defying resistance against the enemy, throwing back the axe hurled by the enemy.

When things developed in this way, the enemy reinforced his force with more than 30 hooligans he had kept waiting in advance.

In this incident provoked by the enemy 5 security personnel of our side were wounded heavily or lightly.

This is the truth of the incident. This notwithstanding, now the US imperialists and their lackeys are distorting the fact to make it appear that our side caused the incident carrying axes. But this can fool no one. The axe used by the enemy when a free-for-all took place is now in our hands. It is an axe of Austrian make used in the US army units.

The attempt of the US imperialist aggressors to shift the responsibility on to our side after openly committing a provocation in the Joint Security Area in broad daylight, self-exposes that they had plotted this incident in a planned manner to find a pretext for starting a war.

As has already been ascertained, this is crystal clear from the fact that while this incident was taking place, the assistant security officer of the



US army, the US duty officer and a captain of the south Korean puppet army directly commanded it, watching the scene, on hill No. 3 opposite Panmunjom, having made even preparations for photographing it, and more than 100 heavily armed military personnel were waiting in three trucks behind them.

That the US imperialists provoked the incident under a premeditated plan was made plain when such highest authorities of the United States as Ford and Kissinger as well as the south Korean puppet clique were all mobilized, as soon as they began the provocative act, in raising simultaneously a large-scale clamour hurling groundless slanders and calumnies against our side and sent an ultimatum-style notice to our side and issued an "order of emergency alert" to the US forces occupying south Korea.

As soon as this incident occurred, we proposed urgently to hold a security officers meeting, considering it natural to deal with it at that meeting first, as it happened in the Joint Security Area.

But the enemy was arrogant enough to refuse this just proposal of ours and came out with a demand for the convocation of a meeting of the Military Armistice Commission, kicking up a frantic row of malignantly vilifying our side, like the thief crying "stop thief!"

We are ready to call a meeting of the Military Armistice Commission at any time after a security officers meeting to make clear the truth of the incident and bar the US side from committing such provocative act again.

Facts make it as plain as noonday to what extent the US imperialists and the Pak Jung Hi puppet clique have gone in their reckless and vicious manoeuvres to increase tension in Korea and start a new war.

The Korean Central News Agency is authorized to sternly condemn the brutal provocative outrage of the US imperialists and the south Korean puppet clique against our side as a planned criminal act deliberately committed by them to incite antagonism and hostility and heighten the tension between the north and the south of Korea and lead the situation to the brink of war and as an unpardonable challenge to the Korean people and the world peace-loving people.

We strongly hold that the US imperialist aggressors must severely punish the prime movers who planned and provoked the incident and criminals involved in the provocative outrage and take appropriate measures against the recurrence of similar incidents.

The US imperialists and the south Korean puppets must look straight at the reality and act with discretion.

If the US imperialists persist in the reckless acts and provocations in Korea, they will have to bear full responsibility for all the consequences arising therefrom.

August 19, 1976



## **STRONG PROTEST AGAINST GRAVE ARMED PROVOCATIONS BY THE US IMPERIALIST AGGRESSION ARMY IN THE JOINT SECURITY AREA, PANMUNJOM**

**(Statements by the Senior Member of our side at the  
meetings of the Military Armistice Commission)**

### **THE 379TH MAC MEETING**

What you have stated is a complete distortion of the fact and a ver-  
bosity full of lies.

Now, I tell you the truth about the grave provocation committed  
yesterday by your side here in the JSA (Joint Security Area). Listen care-  
fully and behave yourself in a discreet manner.

Your side drove 10 odd guards and several men of its work party to  
the road in the vicinity of the Panmun Bridge, where they started cutting  
the tree on the roadside around 1045 hours on August 18.

In connection with such act of your side's hooligans, 4 of our side's  
security guards went to the scene and patiently persuaded them for more  
than 30 minutes that we had planted and have been caring the tree to  
protect the road and, therefore, if they wanted to cut it down, an agreement  
must be reached with us and that they should not fell it unilaterally.

However, your side's hooligans, outnumbering our men, did not comply  
with the just demand of our side's personnel but committed such an out-  
rageous provocation as to gang up on our security guards and beat them  
with such lethal weapons as axes and cudgels.

Your personnel wielded axes and clubs and then threw them at our  
personnel, who picked them up and threw them back. Thus, the free-for-  
all fight started.

These are the very axe and cudgels of your hooligans.

Have a close look at them with your own eyes. There are written  
Stubai Austria on the axe and Chickasaw on the club in English.

As many as 5 security guards of our side got wounded like that from  
your side's reckless surprise provocation. Under the circumstances our  
security personnel had no alternative but to take self-defensive measures.



**Whenever your side committed provocations against our side in the JSA, our side warned against them more than once or twice.**

**However, you did not pay attention to our warnings but committed outrageous provocations in a more impertinent and supercilious manner.**

**Your side committed the latest nasty provocation in the JSA according to your plan and in an organized way to further aggravate tension created in this Area.**

**This is saliently proved by the facts that your side sent to the scene of the incident again this time lots of hooligans carrying axes and clubs with them, notwithstanding that your hooligans were prevented from felling the tree when they tried on August 6, that the acting commander of your support group, the JDO (Joint Duty Officer) of your side and other several officers of your side commanded the provocation from the beginning to the end, with a telescope set up even on the top of the hill northwest of the Conference Area just opposite to the scene and that your side kept more than 100 armed personnel in readiness at the spot near the scene of incident.**

**The very pictures displayed by you yourself only serve to prove that your side committed the provocation in an organized way according to your plan.**

**This is the stern fact.**

**That is why, afraid of such criminal acts of its own being exposed, your side has so stubbornly refused to come in time to the on-the-spot Security Officers' meeting called by our side.**

**All the facts irrefutably prove that your side committed the latest provocation in a planned and organized way to form pretexts to provoke a war as a link in the chain of the systematic manoeuvring of you U.S. imperialist aggressors to cause an armed conflict between both sides by intentionally straining the situation.**

**Despite these stern facts, do you believe that you can cover up the truth about your criminal act and free yourself from the responsibility you have to bear by using such abusive languages as "savage murder," "cruelty" or the like?**

**Your side can by no means call black white nor reverse right and wrong.**

**Your side committed the utterly impertinent and outrageous provocation here in this Conference Area by mobilizing numerous armed personnel, concurrently with the large-scale concentration of the armed forces of aggression in the whole area along the MDL, introduction of ever more military equipment into south Korea and frenzied conduct of war exercises against the northern half of our Republic. Our side cannot but take this fact especially serious.**

**I lodge a strong protest with your side against its organized outrageous provocation again committed against our side by driving out nu-**



merous hooligans and armed personnel here in this JSA according to your plan premeditatedly worked out in advance in wanton violation of the Armistice Agreement and strongly demand that your side punish the main culprits who organized and commanded the latest provocation and the criminals involved in it, expel them from the JSA, assuring that your side will not commit such provocations in the future again.

You are talking as if a few sheets of pictures could be some "evidence." However, the pictures, as I have already pointed out, only serve to reveal the fact that your side committed the latest cruel provocation according to the planned preparation.

If your words that it was difficult for your personnel to slip out of the incident spot were true, how could it be possible for your personnel to take not one or two sheets of the pictures but so many pictures?

This fact proves that you committed the latest incident on purpose with your camera ready.

Whatever distorted charges you may make, you can neither cover up the true facts surrounding the serious provocation committed by the U.S. imperialist aggression army in this area this time nor extricate yourselves from the responsibility for it.

It is neither yesterday nor today that your side started committing such outrageous provocation.

As was already thoroughly exposed to the world, your side committed provocations against our side's personnel on as many as more than 400 occasions in the JSA including the cases in which your personnel took pistols out of their holsters, aimed them at our personnel and fired them, committed collective violence against them since the beginning of this year.

This proves that your side has systematically worsened tension in the JSA and committed the latest outrageous provocation, thereby aggravating confrontation further and leading the situation to the extreme.

Instead of making efforts to straighten out the situation, however, your side pertinaciously refused to come to the on-the-spot Security Officers meeting called by us and is kicking up large-scale frantic "anti-communist" rackets of slandering and defaming our side groundlessly through its hired press media.

All the facts illustratively prove that your side committed the latest provocation in an organized way according to its meticulous plan worked out in advance to further exacerbate the created tension and to attain its foul political aim.

You have alleged that there were some casualties among yourselves; it was punishment the provocators richly deserved.

Your side is both guilty of having caused grave conflict between both sides and also responsible for having created the tense situation in this area.

It only serves to increase the danger which may bring about a grave



consequence, not conducive to the maintenance of security and order in this area and to the removal of tension between both sides that you U.S. imperialist aggression troops behave in an arbitrary and outrageous manner and openly commit an organized group violence against the other side in the JSA where the security guards of both sides are working.

Your side should not make a silly attempt to shift onto others the responsibility misleading world public opinion but punish the prime mover who planned, organized and commanded the latest provocation and take practical action against a recurrence of similar provocations.

You should keep in your mind that if you continue to commit such reckless provocative acts against our side instead of behaving yourselves in a discreet manner, you will have to bear the full responsibility for all the consequences arising therefrom.

### **THE 380TH MAC MEETING**

I have noted your statement made at this meeting.

The truth about the incident which occurred in the JSA (Joint Security Area), to which you have referred, was already thoroughly laid bare before the world.

Our side's position on the issue was clearly expressed in the message conveyed to your side's Commander-in-Chief under the instruction of Comrade Supreme Commander of the Korean People's Army on the 21st last.

It is regrettable that the recent incident occurred in the JSA, Panmunjom, where no big incident has occurred for a long period.

Efforts should be made to prevent a recurrence of such incidents in the future.

For this, both sides should jointly make efforts.

We hope that no clash will occur in the JSA, Panmunjom, and we have so far made all our possible efforts for this.

However, the present order of ensuring security in the JSA has proved to be difficult to avoid this or that conflict between the military personnel of both sides.

As your side is also aware, according to the Agreement approved at the 25th meeting of the MAC held on October 19, 1953, both sides have so far manned the JSA with not more than 35 armed personnel each, who have performed their guard duty at the posts distributed alternatively, freely crossing the MDL.

The present state makes it unavoidable for the military personnel of both sides to stand face to face with each other.



Besides, when both sides enter the JSA, each side has to pass by the post of the other side, which is also a condition that might cause a conflict.

All the incidents which have occurred in this Area in the past directly related to those factors.

Therefore, we deem it necessary to take virtual measures to guarantee security in the JSA and to completely remove the possibility of conflict between military personnel of both sides.

In order to prevent a conflict between the military personnel of both sides and in order that each side ensure the security of its personnel in the Conference Area, Panmunjom, we believe it most reasonable to separate the security personnel of both sides in this Area with the MDL between them so that they may perform their guard duty, moving in their respective area only.

This will make both sides have their guard posts only in their respective part of the Conference Area.

This will prevent military personnel of both sides from both encountering each other and passing by the posts of the other side. Then, there will occur no conflict.

This will be the most solid guarantee of ensuring the security of military personnel of each of the two sides in the Conference Area, Panmunjom.

We regard this proposal of our side for changing the security order in the JSA at Panmunjom as the solid guarantee of preventing possible conflict between military personnel of both sides and of ensuring security.

If you accept this proposal of ours, the discussion on the detailed question to be arisen in this connection can be referred to the Secretaries meeting of both sides.

I have already told you about changing the security order in the JSA.

The point of our proposal is that security personnel of both sides be separated from each other so that they may perform guard duty in their respective area only.

This will make them unable to get mingled with each other and, therefore, nothing will happen.

Mere words can not solve the question substantially.

I have noted your statement that you will seriously study our proposal.

As I have already stated, both sides should exercise prudence and make joint efforts to prevent a recurrence of such incident as occurred in the Joint Security Area recently.

This question cannot be solved by the efforts of either side alone.

Today, we made a proposal for changing the security order which will make security guards of each side perform their guard duty in their respective area separated by the MDL as a virtual measure against the recurrence of such incident between the security personnel of both sides.



If your side is really interested in maintaining security in this Area, it should approach to our proposal in a sincere manner.

Our side has not other subject to be discussed.

As I have already stated, the truth about the incident which occurred in the JSA recently has been made clear.

If your side really wants to ensure the security in the JSA, your side should carefully study our proposal for changing the security order and respond to it in an affirmative manner.

I agree to your proposal for a recess.

### **THE 381ST MAC MEETING**

You have again brought up today the issue which was already made clear.

Our side's position on the incident which occurred in the JSA (Joint Security Area) recently was elucidated in the message sent to your side's Commander-in-Chief under the instruction of Comrade Supreme Commander of the Korean People's Army on the 21st last and was fully explained by our side at the previous meeting.

We expressed regret at the occurrence of the recent incident in this Area regardless how the incident had occurred, stating that efforts should be made so that such conflicts may not occur in the future.

You have referred to punishment. However, our message covers it also together with other claims of your side.

And, we made a substantial proposal for preventing conflicts and ensuring security in the JSA.

We believe that we gave answers to all the questions you have raised.

Your pertinacious insistence on the issue which was already made clear is not an attitude intended to solve the question. That will not be conducive to the solution of the recent incident.

If you carefully study our proposal and statements, everything will become clear to you. And, why do you keep on making the issue complicated?

Both sides should make joint efforts to prevent a recurrence of conflicts in the JSA.

We want no clash in the JSA, Panmunjom and have so far made all our possible efforts.

However, as we stated at the previous meeting, the present order of ensuring security in the JSA has proved to be difficult in avoiding various conflicts between military personnel of both sides.



At present, armed personnel of both sides are performing their guard duty in their posts distributed alternatively across the MDL, freely crossing the line in the JSA and both sides have to pass by the post of the other side when they travel to the JSA. These are the factors which might cause conflicts.

Therefore, in order to prevent conflicts between military personnel of both sides and to ensure the safety of the personnel of each side in the Conference Area, Panmunjom, our side put forward at the 380th MAC meeting the proposal for changing the security order of the JSA whereby separating security personnel of both sides with the MDL between them in this Area so that they perform their guard duty, moving only in their respective area.

We made the proposal proceeding from our sincere desire for ensuring the security of the JSA, Panmunjom.

In fact, if this proposal is carried out, there will be no such case in which military personnel of both sides encounter each other and both sides pass by the post of the other side, and therefore, the possibility of conflicts will be completely removed.

As for the guarantee of ensuring safety of the security guards in the JSA, not only the safety of your side's personnel but also the safety of our side's personnel should be guaranteed.

The safety of security personnel should be assured not unilaterally but jointly by both sides.

Our proposal substantially assures the safety of military personnel of both sides alike.

Notwithstanding this, you have put it aside and are reiterating the issue which was already made clear by us.

What is needed to solve the incident which occurred in the JSA and to prevent a recurrence of such incidents is to take practical measures, not to engage in discussion with empty words.

Your side should accept our side's proposal for changing the security order of the JSA, if your side is really interested in easing tension created in the JSA, in preventing conflicts between both sides and in ensuring safety of the security personnel.

If both sides agree to our proposal, everything will be solved.

I request your side to agree to the proposal for changing the order of the JSA put forward by our side.

You are repeatedly talking about the alleged "assurance of safety" of your side's personnel.

We have already unequivocally told you about the issue.

Can't you understand the meaning of our statement or can't you interpret the sentences? Or, are you deliberately turning away from it?



I recommend you to direct your attention to the statements our side made at the 380th MAC meeting as well as at this meeting.

As for the issue of ensuring the security of the JSA, Panmunjom, both sides should jointly assume the responsibility for and mutually guarantee it in all circumstances.

When we have the obligation to assure your safety, you should also have the obligation to assure our safety, and when you request us to assure your safety, we also have the right to request you to assure our safety.

And, why have you failed to spell out even a single word about ensuring the safety of our side's personnel, declining to assume the responsibility, while demanding us to assure the safety of your side's personnel?

In case both sides fail to assure the safety in the JSA, the source of the incidents as in the recent case can not be eliminated.

Our proposal for changing the security order of the JSA is not a unilateral one but is based on the principle of reciprocity.

When our side's proposal for changing the security order is carried out, conflicts between the security personnel of the two sides will be prevented and the issue of ensuring safety you have claimed settled as well.

There is no big difference between your proposition and ours.

Let's have Secretaries discuss the details.

Do you agree to do so?

As I have already stated, our proposal includes even the withdrawal of our posts from your side's Area.

Therefore, I already stated that your proposal is similar to ours and accordingly, a satisfactory agreement can be reached when Secretaries of both sides discuss the details.

This is based on sincerity intended to solve the issue. You should understand this clearly.

Nevertheless, you keep on making unilateral claim.

Such attitude on your part cannot be conducive to the solution of the issue.

Therefore, I propose that the questions including the withdrawal of our side's posts your side put forward be discussed at Secretaries meeting without delay.

We consider that you have to study our proposal and approach it in a sincere manner.

I await your side's reply to our proposal.



## **ACCORD REACHED ON THE PROPOSED CHANGE OF ORDER IN JOINT SECURITY AREA OF PANMUNJOM**

The 446th Meeting of the Secretaries of the Military Armistice Commission was held at Panmunjom on September 6.

The final accord was reached at the meeting on the proposal for the change of the order in the Joint Security Area of Panmunjom. This accord was endorsed by the Senior Members of the two sides to the Military Armistice Commission.

According to the accord, all the military personnel including the guardsmen of the two sides in the Joint Security Area are forbidden to enter the portion of the opposite side across the Military Demarcation Line in the Joint Security Area.

But, in accordance with the provision of Paragraph 11 of the Armistice Agreement, the members of the Military Armistice Commission and the Joint Observer Teams and the staffs of the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission are excepted from this.

The military personnel who want to enter the portion of the opposite side across the Military Demarcation Line for the control and maintenance of the communication facilities in the Joint Security Area or for other authorized activities by unarmed personnel are required to get a prior consent of the opposite side.

All the non-military personnel of the two sides are guaranteed free activity across the Military Demarcation Line in the Joint Security Area.

Both sides are allowed free activity in the buildings on the Military Demarcation Line of the Joint Security Area which are jointly used. But, in the buildings used by one side, only the side using them can freely move.

In accordance with the accord, the two sides are under obligation to guarantee the safety of the personnel of the opposite side lawfully entering their respective portions in the Joint Security Area in the future.

This is a most reliable guarantee for preventing a clash in the Joint Security Area at Panmunjom and guaranteeing the safety of their military personnel by the two sides.

Truth to tell, under the old security arrangements in the Joint Security Area, it was hard to avoid a clash of this and that form between the military personnel of the two sides.



**In the past, in the Joint Security Area, the armed personnel of the two sides performed their guard duty at posts located alternately, freely crossing the Military Demarcation Line, and thus the military personnel of the two sides were inevitably faced with each other.**

**When the personnel of the two sides went in and out of the Joint Security Area, they had to pass by the post of the other side. This was also a cause of possible clashes between the two sides.**

**The incidents that occurred in the Joint Security Area in the past were all directly linked with these things.**

**When the proposal for the change of the order in the Joint Security Area which was finally agreed upon between the two sides is carried into effect, in the Joint Security Area of Panmunjom, the military personnel of the two sides will not come upon each other or pass by the post of the other side and, accordingly, there will be no more clash.**

**This proposal of our side for changing the order in the Joint Security Area of Panmunjom is a manifestation of our consistent and sincere efforts to avoid a clash between the military personnel of the two sides and guarantee the security in this area.**

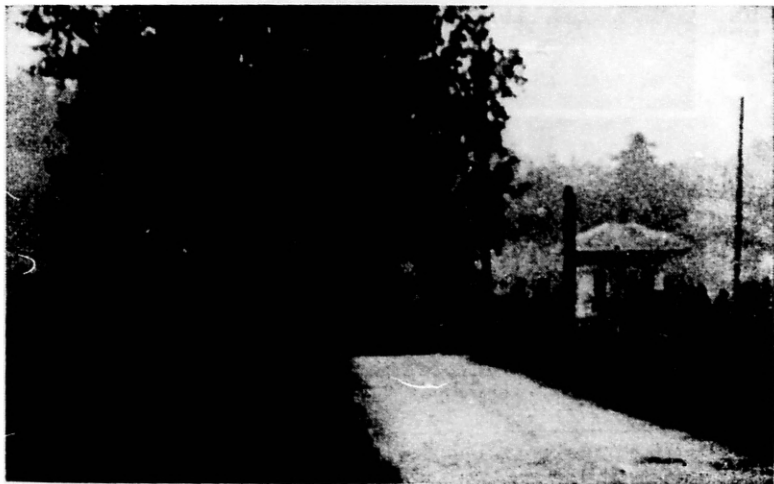
**In accordance with the accord on the change of the order in the Joint Security Area of Panmunjom reached between the two sides, the safety of the military personnel of the two sides will be practically guaranteed in this area in the future.**





**The stump of the tree chopped  
down by the enemy**

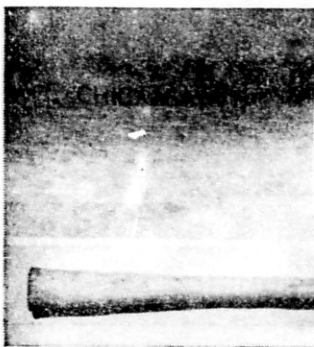
**The military hooligans who came on a large truck to  
fell the tree under the command of a US officer**



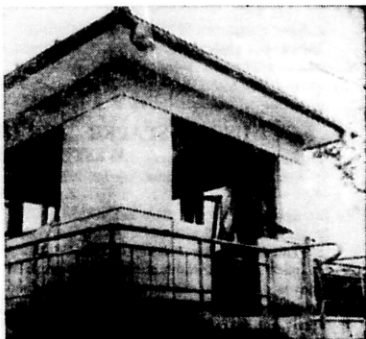
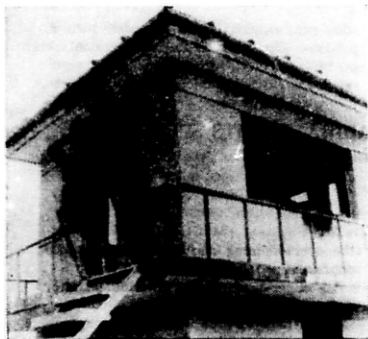




**The murderous weapons, an axe  
and club, carried by the enemy**







**Our side's guardposts demolished by  
fully armed enemy soldiers**



**With a large truck the enemy  
destroyed the roadblock at our  
checkpoint**





## US NEWSPAPER "THE GUARDIAN" EDITS SPECIAL WRITEUPS ON AUGUST 26

The September 1 issue of the US newspaper "the Guardian" put out on August 26 devoted three pages to special writeups exposing the US imperialists' new war provocation racket in Korea occasioned by their recent provocative incident at Panmunjom, according to a report from New York.

On its front page the newspaper, under the blockletter title "What Is Hidden Behind the 'Tree Cutting Incident' in Korea? The United States Tried to Start a War", carried a big photograph showing guardsmen of our side fighting against the attack of Americans on August 18 when the US imperialist aggressors provoked an incident at Panmunjom.

In the editorial column it ran a lengthy editorial.

On the whole of another page it carried special writeups woven with an article and photographs bringing the truth of the incident to light. Under the heading "US Not Reconciled to Defeat", the editorial said as follows:

Once again US imperialism is menacing a small Asian country.

The naked and deliberate provocation by US occupation troops at Panmunjom offers a grim reminder that so long as the United States continues its illegal and outrageous military occupation of south Korea, using its arms to keep a fascist regime in power, there will be no peace in the Korean peninsula.

It is also a reminder that the tentacles of United States imperialism reach into every continent and every corner of the earth and that the struggle to defeat this system is rightly the principal concern of

the overwhelming majority of the world's oppressed peoples and nations.

US imperialism has suffered defeat after defeat in East Asia.

Then there was the United States aggression against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in 1950, an intervention engineered under the guise of a spurious "United Nations mandate." But it was on the Korean peninsula that United States troops suffered their very first military defeat ever when the men and women of the DPRK repulsed Gen. Douglas MacArthur's invasion of the north.

But as the recent United States provocation in Korea demonstrates, Washington is hardly reconciled to defeat. Despite the jingoistic nonsense emanating from the nation's media, the facts about the incident at the Korean truce line are beginning to emerge—and they tell a far different story. It is all too reminiscent of the "Mayaguez incident" last year in which scores of Cambodians and Americans were needlessly killed because of United States recklessness and the Ford Administration's desire to make a show of military force in the wake of its Viet Nam debacle.

Both the United States and its client regime in Seoul must bear full responsibility for the incident at Panmunjom and the ensuing loss of life there.

By unilaterally attempting to chop down a tree in the jointly administered armistice zone—violating arrangements that prevail at this "border"—the United States left DPRK troops no choice but to defend their legitimate rights in the area.

The reason is not hard to find. Ever since the military defeat in Indochina,



United States military strategists have made no secrecy of their concern with restoring their "credibility" in the other areas of the world. Secretary of State Kissinger and the Pentagon have never abandoned their "domino theory" of United States strategic interests. This is the reason why the DPRK has been sounding extensive warnings in recent months over the possibility of new provocations in Korea.

There is also another factor. A number of observers have already pointed out that the confrontation in the armistice zone was especially "convenient" for the fascist Pak Jung Hi regime in the south. It occurred at very moment when international attention was once again focusing on the gross violations of human rights in the south. The Pak regime has deliberately manufactured provocations in the past in an effort to divert attention from its crimes and from the fact that it had no popular base among the people in the south.

South Korea, an East Asian "outpost" of United States imperialism is not only the menace to all the peoples of Asia; it is most likely an area for yet another imperialist adventure with all of the grave consequences that ensued from both the Korean war and the Viet Nam war.

So long as the United States maintains its troops and nuclear weapons in south Korea, the Korean peninsula will remain a tinderbox threatening to touch off one more war that could reach far wider dimension. Here is a task for the American people to address both in their own self-interests and in the cause of international solidarity. Washington must be forced to end its occupation of south Korea, dismantle its weapons of nuclear destruction and allow the Korean people to settle their own affairs by themselves.

An article illustrated with a photograph showing our side at a meeting of the Armistice Commission holding out as material evidence an axe taken from the enemy, said:

United States readies for war—over a tree.

The United States almost provoked another war in Korea last week.

Culminating months of escalating tension along the truce line separating the DPRK from the United States controlled south Korea, Washington mobilized a heavily armed air and naval armada in order to cut down a tree in the Demilitarized Zone.

The DPRK bitterly accused the US of its belligerence and expressed her readiness to defend herself, while showing great self-restraint.

The DPRK has been warning throughout the year that the tinderbox situation along the Military Demarcation Line could get out of hand any moment. On August 5 the DPRK issued a very strong statement denouncing the latest United States provocations, including new war games, the introduction of additional weapons and warlike propaganda.

As usual, the United States ignored the DPRK Statement, ultimately taking steps that led to the near-war situation of August 21.

The United States version of events, of course, is different.

Precisely why the DPRK would commit such an act was never explained, even though it contradicts the exceptionally correct attitude the north has adopted ever since the zone was created in the aftermath of the Korean war 23 years ago.

What followed was a virtual recreation of the Mayaguez Incident last year when the United States massively retaliated because Cambodia legally took a US ship in tow for violating its waters. Instead of trying to reduce tension, the United States moved to a war footing in Korea reinforcing its military forces in south Korea and placing them on a combat ready alert.

South Korean dictator Pak Jung Hi took advantage of the situation to demand in a "speech" that it was time to use "a stick" against the north—that is, to carry out a military attack, which seemed possible at the time. Pak, experiencing extreme difficulty in retaining control over increasing opposition at home despite having a great repressive powers at his disposal, is thought to entertain visions of recreating the Korean war in order to remain in power.

Instead of discussing the issue with the



DPRK representatives, as is mandatory at the jointly administered armistice zone when there is a difference of views, the United States decided to trim or cut down the tree on August 18, during which time an altercation developed leading to casualties on both sides. Such a conflict was almost inevitable—and the United States obviously knew when it sent the tree-trimming crew to do its work under command of two American officers who were subsequently killed in the melee.

The Korean Central News Agency of the DPRK issued a statement on August 19 contradicting the US version of the event. The DPRK account was not mentioned by the United States news media, which contented itself with a bicentennial orgy of jingoist one-sided reportage.

According to KCNA, after the United States-led group came with axes to cut down the tree—which, incidentally, DPRK side had planted and nurtured—four north Korean security personnel approached them and, as in the incident in earlier in the month, declared that the tree must not be felled without prior consultation “with our side”.

The DPRK request was met with invective and physical assault. KCNA said the four were beaten and an axe was thrown at them. When the north Koreans responded in self-defence the United States side called in reinforcements, conveniently waiting nearby, with photographers in the background.

The injuries and deaths occurred during the conflict that followed. The axes used in the incident were all of Austrian make, used by the US side, not by the DPRK. The north Koreans who used these weapons obtained them during the melee from the US side. During a meeting of both sides August 19, the DPRK representative displayed one of the axes as evidence of from which side the weapons came.

As soon as the confrontation took place Washington decided on making a huge show of force instead of attempting to reach some understanding about the matter, even though the Ford Administration well knows that the DPRK is not the kind of

country to be intimidated by the US threats and that any US aggression would be repelled in kind.

The question is, why, then, did Washington in the first place provoke an incident that could have been avoided, then use it as pretext to virtually start a war, ignoring the most reasonable reply from the DPRK?

One explanation is that it is intended to help Ford win the presidential nomination and to rally the more jingoistic wing of the Republican Party to his support. The first attempt to provoke an incident at the tree occurred before the nomination was sewn up. The second tree cutting party set out at the same time the Republican Convention was scheduled to cast its ballots in Kansas City.

Apparently Ford is also looking for votes from outside the ranks of the Republican Party. So skillfully did the Administration distort the events that neither the press nor his Democratic opponent saw anything to criticize in the contrived crisis over a tree that brought the US to the brink of war.

On August 18 Secretary of State Kissinger convened two meetings of the “Washington special action group” (WASAG), an informal arm of the national security council. The second meeting was held early in the morning of August 19. At the “WASAG” meetings it was decided to place US forces on special alert and to send US fighter bombers to Korea, a squadron of F-4s from Okinawa and a squadron of F-111s from Idaho. These decisions were made even though CIA Director George Bush stated at both meetings that “there was no evidence of any north Korean military moves towards the south Korean borders”, the “New York Times” reported.

Further United States military actions were orchestrated by Ford and Kissinger in Kansas City. The two met there for fortyfive minutes and discussed the strategy to be followed in Korea. They decided the US would cut down the tree at Panmunjom at any cost. To bolster US forces further, Ford and Kissinger decided to send to Korean waters the USS “Midway,” a carrier with at least 75 aircraft. The



"Midway" was escorted by four frigates equipped with guided missiles.

Appearing August 20 on NBC's morning show, Kissinger stated the US had sent "certain reinforcements" to south Korea "in order to discourage any attempts by the north Koreans to escalate". Kissinger also asserted that US actions would be "guided by the north Korean response to our demands for explanations and reparations." Later the State Department made clear that Kissinger meant to say "amends" not "reparations," but did not explain what it meant by amends.

Escalation was, meanwhile, taking place entirely on the US side.

Only after the US placed its forces on "alert," had issued false statements about the events of August 18 and made belligerent statements attacking the DPRK, did the Supreme Commander of the Korean People's Army issued an order placing the Korean People's Army in a status of combat readiness.

Also on August 20, the US issued a warn-

ing to the DPRK that the US would "retaliate" and on August 21 the tree was felled by the US, which mobilized several hundred troops for the operation. The troops were protected by three B-52s, 26 helicopter gunships and an unspecified number of F-4s and F-111s, all circling overhead, ready to carry out a massive attack against the DPRK. Pyongyang instead made an analysis of the US provocation.

When the Commission met on August 25, the DPRK proposed that troops of the two sides be physically separated to avoid incident. This would mean that security troops would stay on their respective side of the demarcation line in Panmunjom. There had been no US response to this proposal at press time.

A great many US troops remain in south Korea armed with nuclear weapons protecting an unpopular dictatorial regime that will stop at nothing to remain in power.

As long as US remains in south Korea the question is always on the immediate agenda: What about next time?



## **US NEWSPAPER "WORKERS WORLD" CARRIES A SPECIAL ARTICLE ON AUGUST 27**

**According to a report from New York, the US newspaper "Workers World" published a special two-page article in its August 27th issue, exposing and denouncing the US imperialists for their latest frantic moves to provoke a new war in Korea.**

**The article reads in part:**

### **US Expansionism Behind The Powder Keg On Korea**

The US ultimatum to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea last week was reminiscent of the late 1930s in its brazenness, sheer effrontery, and recklessness.

In the thirties it was Hitler who delivered ultimatums to country after country that resisted Nazi occupation. There was always an "incident" played up by their propagandists to depict the Nazis as innocent victims and serve as the excuse for further aggression.

Today it is the Ford-Kissinger cabal of bankers, industrialists, and prime defense contractors who pretend to be the aggrieved party. Wasn't this the face they put on when they demonstratively cut down a tree and demolished a north Korean sentry post? But in reality they were demanding that the Korean people "respect" the interests of the multi-national corporations and their piratical adventures in far-away lands.

The Ford Administration demanded from this small country striving for independence and the reunification of its people that it apologize for the killing of two US army officers in an incident which the US mili-

tary provoked. The facts of the incident—in which five soldiers of the DPRK were also gravely wounded—have been carefully documented by the north Koreans for all the world to see. But in the capitalist media here, it is as though this information were a book closed with seven seals, never to be opened to the American public.

The US Government, while staging a reckless show of military strength along the Demilitarized Zone, had the temerity to demand "amends and reparations" from the DPRK.

### **Whose Apologies Are In Order?**

Why should the Korean people apologize or make amends to the US imperialists—who have been occupying their country for over 25 years after having tried to decimate the socialist north? Are the Koreans occupying the United States, dividing the country in half—or is it the other way around?

Because of US determination to colonize Korea, innumerable American lives have been lost and tens of thousands of soldiers wounded, many of whom are still in hospitals all over the United States. It would have preferred, and still prefers, a peaceful solution to the Korean question on the



basis of the complete withdrawal of US military forces from south Korea, so as to permit the Koreans themselves to settle this question.

The Truman-Acheson Administration, like its successors, was hell-bent on imperialist domination of the Korean peninsula, and all Asia for that matter.

Each and every one of the incidents created in Korea since the signing of the armistice in 1953 has been the work of the US military.

But the US has become extraordinarily adept at throwing the burden on the other side. It has been developing this art since the sinking of the "Maine" in 1898 provided the trigger for the Spanish-American war.

### **Struggle Against Neo-Colonial Domination**

If a man holds you down by standing on your neck, and you bite his toe, are you the aggressor?

That's the case in Korea. For longer than a quarter of a century the American public has had it drummed into their ears, day in and day out, that there are a north and a south Korea: that the south stands for "freedom".

But the "Wall Street Journal", which speaks to a select audience of its kind, let the cat out of the bag when it raised the question, "why are we there?" The answer, it says quite frankly, is that in south Korea they have a "private economic development as opposed to socialist development" (in the north). How true, how true.

In the south, there are literally hundreds of US, Japanese, and West European corporations wringing out superprofits from the sweat and blood of the southern population. It all flows into the coffers of Wall Street, the Bourse, and Lombard Street. The south also has the blessings of high unemployment, galloping inflation, practically nonexistent health care facilities, and huge concentration camps where even the mildest form of dissent is treated as a major crime and where the victims are

subjected to medieval torture. All this is admitted to in virtually all the capitalist papers of the world.

It is no surprise to anybody that President Pak Jung Ill has imprisoned his own political opponents, and rules as an absolute dictator subject only to the will and whim of the American military, which really runs that part of the unhappy country. So tight is the grip of the United States on the south Korean puppets that they are not even allowed to meet alone with the north Koreans at the Panmunjom meetings. And it is always the US Commander who does the talking.

The US press, however, claims that the population in the south is anti-Communist and against unification with the north. If that is the case, why is it necessary to have more than 40,000 US troops in south Korea, plus untold thousands of US civilian personnel—to assist the south Korean military as advisers, technicians and whatnot?

The south has an army of 700,000. It is equipped with the most modern and powerful weapons, which the US military boasts are fit and combat-ready. If that is so, why has the US placed nuclear bombs, perhaps by the hundreds, in south Korea? If there is a well-equipped, combat-ready army of 700,000 against a smaller army in the north, why the atomic bombs? Why, even more so, was it necessary for the US to send a naval task force of the United States, including the nuclear aircraft carrier "Midway" plus B-52s and F-4s and F-111s? and all this against a small nation, the smaller half of Korea?

To top it off, there are no volunteers from any of the socialist countries.

Why then this utterly shameless and provocative display of the US military might with nuclear weapons? Why?—if not for the fact that the utterly corrupt Pak regime could not withstand the blows of its own people without the presence of the US military.

This unprecedented show of military might against a small country was also meant to threaten the rest of the world.

It is to be noted that an August 21 editorial in "Rodong Sinmun" calls upon "the



governments and peoples of the socialist, non-aligned countries and all other countries of the world who love peace to direct deeper attention to the critical situation created in Korea and take proper steps for curbing and frustrating the manoeuvres of the US imperialists and their stooges to start a new war.

Little has been said in the United States about the Colombo Conference of Non-aligned Nations. All 86 voted to demand the withdrawal of the US troops from south Korea. Well, here we have the overwhelming majority of the human race demanding the withdrawal of the US military from Korea. But the industrialists and financiers who run this country have demonstrated the most indecent contempt for the rest of humanity and hidden the significance of the vote at Colombo on the inside pages of the metropolitan newspapers.

It is not, however, surprising. Doesn't the US capitalist establishment treat the rest of the world with contempt on the question of the Palestinians? And even more recently on southern Africa?

But, someone will say, it is the UN Command that is in charge of the US military in Korea. That is the most fraudulent of all the fraudulent arguments against the withdrawal of the US military from the peninsula.

The "UN Command" is pure technicality that the US military planners are abusing.

The majority of the UN members are opposed to the UN having anything to do in Korea. They actually voted last year for the dissolution of the UN Command.

Even so, anyone can see that by virtue of the 86 countries who voted at Colombo for withdrawal, the so-called UN Command is a lame duck and an abuse of authority. It was always a US war, and let it not be forgotten that Pentagon and the military-industrial complex backed by the financiers and industrialists drove this country into the war in Korea.

Truman and his military advisers unilaterally announced a "police action" and the US Congress never even had a chance to place a war declaration on the agenda.

But in north Korea, where socialist con-

sciousness was already strong, the people were very aware of what they must do. Their struggle against US aggression constitutes one of the most remarkable chapters in the history of the resistance to colonization. The exploits of the Korean people in the 1950-53 war—heroic deeds of men, women and even children—are truly legendary, as all acquainted with that struggle readily attest.

Support for the Korean people against US aggression should occupy no less a place in the struggle here than did resistance to the Viet Nam war.

The positioning of this huge naval task force equipped with nuclear devices in Korean waters holds the greatest danger, not only to the Korean people, but the American people as well.

It is necessary to alert working class and progressive public opinion in this country to the disastrous course on which the Ford-Kissinger cabal has embarked.

The Pentagon is trying to paint Ford up as a "tough guy" capable of regaining the Pacific as an American lake. In reality he is a sawdust Caesar reflecting the decaying stage of American imperialism—but one whose tragic consequences could cause millions upon millions of casualties at home and abroad.

### **"Poplar Incident" A Planned Pretext?**

The United States pushes to brink of new war in Korea. The old saying that "in war the first casualty is truth" was once again amply demonstrated this week as the United States military teetered on the brink of attacking the DPRK.

The big business media in this country have pulled out all the stops in their well-practiced techniques of yellow journalism in reporting on the Korean crisis. "Ax-wielding Communists" was among the milder epithets the lords of the press indulged themselves in while portraying the latest flare-up along the Demilitarized Zone that divides fascist south Korea from the socialist north.

But before the Pentagon starts shooting



again in Korea, before tens of thousands or even millions of lives are sacrificed the people of the United States at least deserve to know the truth about the events that culminated in the death of two American military police officers and the serious wounding of five north Koreans.

First some points have been completely blotted out from the stories peddled by the bosses' media: that offending poplar tree which the US brass was so anxious to cut down is in a section of the Joint Security Area at Panmunjom designated under the DPRK control. Two weeks ago a patrol of US troops were turned back when they came to chop it down and agreed to leave after being told they lacked authorization to be in the area.

When 14 of them returned around 10:45 on the morning of August 18, four north Korean soldiers approached and stated that the tree could not be felled until an agreement has been reached on the question by the two sides. According to Korean accounts, the US soldiers began cursing and spitting and finally threw an axe at the Koreans. This precipitated a free-for-all, the immediate results of which are well known.

The response ensuing from Ford, Kissinger and the Joint Chiefs of Staff has been so bellicose and reckless that it is hard to avoid the conclusion that the whole thing was preplanned,—a set-up to give the Pentagon militarists an opportunity to stage one of their much-beloved "shows of strength" that the US armed forces can

still force their will on a small country on the other side of the globe, despite the humiliating defeats in Southeast Asia.

The now notorious poplar, which has actually been described in a hysterical "New York Daily News" article as "the tree that caused the death of two American servicemen," was chopped down by a battle party of three hundred heavily armed troops as 26 helicopters whirled overhead, Guam-based B-52 bombers scraped against the territorial airspace of the DPRK, and the nuclear aircraft carrier "Midway" put to sea for Korean waters trailed by a flotilla of frigates and guided missile cruisers.

This display of the "Big Stick" as Theodore Roosevelt, the godfather of US colonialism, was fond of calling it, has been a big dud inasmuch as it was intended to terrify the Korean people. A nation long accustomed to dealing with the Pentagon's bully tactics, the DPRK has been cautioning for some weeks now that the US Eighth Army Command was stepping up its provocations.

In light of the latest events, the DPRK newspaper "Rodong Sinmun" (August 23) warned that a grave situation which may lead to war any moment has now been created owing to the large-scale military action of the US imperialists. And the paper expressed full confidence in the unshakable stand and resolution of the revolutionary armed forces of the Party, and of the entire people to defend the security of the socialist fatherland and the gains of the revolution.